

CAPSULE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey No.: PG:LAU-16 (PACS 1.21) Construction Date: circa 1885
Name: The Free Quill Building
Location: 126 Washington Boulevard, Laurel, Prince George's County

Private/Vacant/Unoccupied/Fair/Restricted

Description:

The Free Quill Building is a 2½-story, 4-bay commercial building on the east side of Washington Boulevard in Laurel, Prince George's County. Constructed circa 1885, the building is a massed plan with a corner hipped-roof tower. The tower has a dentil and modillion cornice. The structure has a shed-roof which slopes to the rear and a false mansard front. There are four brick chimneys on the roof. The tower roof and mansard roof are covered in pressed metal shingles, and there are gable dormers on the mansard and hipped roofs. The building is of brick construction with a brick foundation. The windows are double-hung vinyl replacement. There is a 1-story brick shed-roof addition on the rear elevation.

Significance:

The Free Quill Building was built circa 1885 on land owned by James A. Clark, the editor of the Free Quill. The Free Quill began publishing in January 1884, and was the first long-term weekly newspaper in Laurel. The upper floor of the building was an open hall which was used for public meetings and dances (Centennial Booklet 1970: 54). The Free Quill eventually became the Laurel News Leader, but it is unknown where the paper was produced after the James Clark sold the property. The property was conveyed to Charles Shaffer in 1895, and was sold to Edmund Hill in 1898. Edmund Hill ran a butcher shop out of the building, and continued to use the upper hall as a public meeting space. The heirs of Edmund Hill sold the property in 1919 to Ormand Phair. Ormand Phair had purchased the adjoining residential property in 1910 from Charles Shaffer. Trustees for Ormand Phair sold both properties to the Maryland Drug Company in 1958. The current owners purchased the property in 1973.

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form
Montgomery-Prince George's Short-term Congestion Relief

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name: (indicate preferred name)

historic The Free Quill Building (preferred)

and/or common Heier Property I

2. Location:

street & number 126 Washington Boulevard

n/a not for publication

city, town Laurel

___ vicinity of

congressional district

state

Maryland

county

Prince George's

3. Classification:

Category

___ district

☒ building(s)

___ structure

___ site

___ object

Ownership

___ public

☒ private

___ both

Public Acquisition

___ in process

___ being considered

☒ not applicable

Status

___ occupied

☒ unoccupied

___ work in progress

Accessible

☒ yes: restricted

___ yes: unrestricted

___ no

Present Use

___ agriculture

___ commercial

___ education

___ entertainment

___ government

___ industrial

___ military

___ transportation

___ museum

___ park

___ private

___ residence

___ religious

___ scientific

☒ other:

vacant

4. Owner of Property: (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Charles H. and Eileen Heier, Jr.

street & number 130 Washington Boulevard

telephone no.:

city, town Laurel

state and zip code

Maryland 20707

5. Location of Legal Description

Land Records of Prince George's County

liber 4188

street & number Prince George's County Judicial Center

folio 056

city, town Upper Marlboro

state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date

___ federal

___ state

___ county

___ local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

7. Description

Survey No. PG:LAU-16 (PACS 1.21)

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved

date of move _____

Resource Count: 1

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Free Quill Building is a 2½-story, 4-bay commercial building on the east side of Washington Boulevard in Laurel, Prince George's County. Constructed circa 1885, the building is a massed plan with a corner hipped-roof tower. The tower has a dentil and modillion cornice. The structure has a shed-roof which slopes to the rear and a false mansard front. There are four brick chimneys on the roof. The tower roof and mansard roof are covered in pressed metal shingles, and there are gable dormers on the mansard and hipped roofs. The building is of brick construction with a brick foundation. The windows are double-hung vinyl replacement. There is a 1-story brick shed-roof addition on the rear elevation.

The east, or front elevation is composed of the main block and the corner tower. It has been altered with the addition of modern projecting plate-glass windows on the main block. The first story entrance is centered on the main block, and it is flanked by the plate-glass windows. There is a second door centered on the tower. It has a 1-light transom. The second story has been altered with replacement windows. There are two 1/1 double-hung windows on the second story of the main block, and one on the tower. The outlines of the original, larger segmental-arched windows are visible in the brickwork. There are two gable-dormers with 1/1 double-hung windows on the false mansard. There is a ghost of a lunette window in the third floor of the tower. The gable-dormer in the tower has been filled with a louvered vent.

The south elevation consists of the corner tower, the side of the main block, and the rear shed addition. The first floor fenestration has been bricked-in, but the segmental-arch outlines of three windows are still visible in the brickwork. The tower has a 2-light sliding window in the third floor of the tower. The tower roof has a gable dormer with a louvered vent. The outline of a lunette window is still visible. The second story has four 1/1 double-hung windows. The outlines of the original segmental-arched windows are still visible. There are star-shaped tie-bolts above the first and second stories. There is a boarded door on the shed-roof addition.

The east, or rear elevation has been altered with the rear addition. The rear of the tower has a lunette window which has been infilled with brick, the outlines of which are still visible in the brickwork. There is a gable dormer on the roof of the tower, fitted with a louvered vent. The rear of the addition is paneled in vertical aluminum siding. It has a single door. There is one 1/1 double-hung window centered on the second story of the main block. There are two chimneys at the roofline. Star-shaped tie-bolts are located along the cornice line.

The north elevation has been altered with the addition of aluminum siding. The first story of the main block is covered in vertical aluminum siding. There is a single door towards the rear of the main block. There is no fenestration on this elevation of the rear addition. The second story has four 1/1 double-hung windows. The original outlines of the larger segmental-arched windows are visible in the brickwork. The roof of the tower is visible, along with the gable dormer which has a louvered vent. There are star-shaped tie-bolts above the first and second stories.

There are no outbuildings associated with this property.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

RESOURCE NAME: The Free Quill Building

SURVEY NO.: PG:LAU-16 (PACS 1.21)

ADDRESS: 126 Washington Boulevard, Laurel, Prince George's County

7. Description (Continued)

The Free Quill Building is located on the east side of Washington Boulevard and is surrounded by commercial buildings. The setting is relatively unchanged from the historic setting, though the nature and design of the surrounding buildings is somewhat more modern.

8. Significance

Survey No. PG:LAU-16 (PACS 1.21)

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
__ prehistoric	__ archaeology-prehistoric	__ Community planning	__ landscape architecture	__ religion
__ 1400-1499	__ archeology-historic	__ conservation	__ law	__ science
__ 1500-1599	__ agriculture	__ economics	__ literature	__ sculpture
__ 1600-1699	__ architecture	__ education	__ military	__ social/
__ 1700-1799	__ art	__ engineering	__ music	humanitarian
X 1800-1899	__ commerce	__ exploration/settlement	__ philosophy	__ theater
__ 1900-	__ communication	__ industry	__ politics/government	__ transportation
		__ invention	__ other (specify)	

Specific dates	circa 1885	Builder/Architect
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check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
and/or
Applicable Exceptions: A B C D E F G
Level of Significance: national state local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Free Quill Building was built circa 1885 on land owned by James A. Clark, the editor of the Free Quill. The Free Quill began publishing in January 1884, and was the first long-term weekly newspaper in Laurel. The upper floor of the building was an open hall which was used for public meetings and dances (Centennial Booklet 1970: 54). The Free Quill eventually became the Laurel News Leader, but it is unknown where the newspaper was produced after James Clark sold the property. The property was conveyed to Charles Shaffer in 1897, and the Free Quill Building was sold to Edmund Hill in 1898. Edmund Hill ran a butcher shop out of the building, and continued to use the upper hall as a public meeting space. The heirs of Edmund Hill sold the property in 1919 to Ormand Phair. Ormand Phair had purchased the adjoining residential property in 1910 from Charles Shaffer. Trustees for Ormand Phair sold both properties to the Maryland Drug Company in 1958. The current owners purchased the property in 1973.

The Free Quill Building is located in Laurel. Laurel is located on land originally patented to Richard Snowden in 1715 as "Snowden's New Birmingham Manor" in Prince George's County. "Snowden's New Birmingham Manor" was approximately 1214 hectares (3000 acres) from Old Columbia Pike to the present city of Laurel, and from south of Greencastle and Van Dusen Roads to north of Sandy Spring Road. The 1715 patent increased the already substantial Snowden land holdings, and later additions to Snowden land eventually covered 3749 hectares (9265 acres) by 1743. (Cook 1976: 270-271).

The Snowden family had established a grist mill at Laurel about 1810. In 1824, the grist mill was adapted to spin cotton yarn that was shipped to textile mills. In 1835, the mill was converted back to a grist mill. Snowden family members and the O.C. Tiffany company of Baltimore established the Patuxent Cotton Manufacturing Company. Factory buildings were built along the river, and the town of Laurel developed as a manufacturing town along Main Street running between the factory and the B&O Railroad station (Prince George's County 1974: 283; Prince George's County Historical Society 1980: 37). Laurel became the largest town in the county. The textile mill provided the basis for Laurel's economy into the twentieth century. When textile output began to decline early in the century, Laurel began to develop as a suburb for both Washington and Baltimore. Located halfway between the two cities, Laurel was accessible to commuters by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and by U.S. 1 (Prince George's County 1974: 284).

The Free Quill Building is an example of a late-nineteenth century commercial building. Several factors determined the scale and form of the commercial structure. The density of adjacent

CONTINUATION SHEET

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

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ADDRESS: 126 Washington Boulevard, Laurel, Prince George's County

8. Significance (Continued)

buildings, the size of the building lot, consumer demand and the resources available to the builder determined if the structure used vernacular or academic forms. Commercial buildings which used vernacular traditions were often the earliest commercial buildings in the area. Vernacular residences converted to commercial use were established at intersections and serviced the local neighborhood.

In areas of high population density and commercial activity, substantial and function-specific commercial buildings were constructed. Common building compositions of suburban commercial property types include the two-part commercial block and one-part commercial block. Although these property types are most often found in urban settings, the core of suburban commercial centers can include such buildings.

The two-part commercial block is the common type of commercial structure. The buildings are two to four stories tall and are horizontally divided into functions. The first floor services the general public as merchandise space or lobby space for a bank or hotel, or as the printing area for a local newspaper. The upper floors provide space for private offices, hotel rooms residential units, or public meeting halls (Longstreth 1987, 24).

National Register Evaluation:

Constructed circa 1885, the Free Quill Building is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The property is not eligible under Criterion A, as research conducted indicates no association with any historic events or trends significant in the development of national, state, or local history. Historic research indicates that the property has no association with persons who have made specific contributions to history, and therefore, it does not meet Criterion B. It is not eligible under Criterion C, as it is a highly altered example of an late-nineteenth century commercial building in Laurel. The first floor facade has been greatly altered with a modern storefront, and all the windows have been replaced and the larger openings filled in. The upper story which once served as a meeting hall has been converted into apartments. The building no longer retains its integrity of materials, design, workmanship, feeling, or association. Finally, the structure has no known potential to yield important information, and therefore, is not eligible under Criterion D.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Eligibility recommended _____

Eligibility Not Recommended XX

Comments _____

Reviewer, OPS: Chad Sude

Date: 9/2/99

Reviewer, NR Program: Marking

Date: 9/7/99

gms

9. Major Bibliographical References Survey No. PG:LAU-16(PACS 1.21)

See Attached

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____
Quadrangle name Laurel, MD Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries
state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan L. Taylor

Organization P.A.C. Spero & Company

date May 1998

street & number 40 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 412

telephone (410) 296-1635

city or town Baltimore

state Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposed only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCP/DHCD
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
(410) 514-7600

CONTINUATION SHEET

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

RESOURCE NAME: The Free Quill Building

SURVEY NO.: PG:LAU-16 (PACS 1.21)

ADDRESS: 126 Washington Boulevard, Laurel, Prince George's County

9. Major Bibliographical References (Continued)

- Brugger, Robert A. 1988. Maryland, A Middle Temperament 1634-1980. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Cook, William G. 1976. Montpelier & the Snowden Family. Privately Printed.
- Hiebert, Ray Eldon, and Richard K. MacMaster. 1976. A Grateful Remembrance: the Story of Montgomery County, Maryland. Rockville, Maryland: Montgomery County Government and the Montgomery County Historical Society.
- Hopkins, G.M. [1879] 1975. Atlas of 15 Miles Around Washington including County of Prince George's, Maryland. Reprint, Riverdale, Maryland: Prince George's County Historical Society.
- Land Records of Prince George's County, Upper Marlboro, Maryland.
- "The Laurel Factory." News and Notes from the Prince George's County Historical Society. (July 1980): 38-40. (First published in The American Farmer. Baltimore, Maryland, August 1845.)
- Liebs, Chester H. 1985. Mainstreet to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture. Boston: Little Brown & Co.
- Longstreth, Richard, ed. 1987. The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press.
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee. 1984. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Poe, Gertrude L. 1970. Laurel, Maryland: Centennial Souvenir Booklet. Laurel, Maryland: The News Leader.
- Prince George's County Community Renewal Program. 1974. The Neighborhoods of Prince George's County. Upper Marlboro, Maryland: Prince George's County Government.
- Tindall, George Brown. 1984. America: A Narrative History. 2 vols. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Virta, Alan. 1984. Prince George's County: A Pictorial History. Rev. 1991. Virginia Beach: The Donning Company Publishers.
- Virta, Alan. "The Pretty, Rosy-Cheeked Girls of Laurel." News and Notes from the Prince George's County Historical Society. (July 1980): 37.

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STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

RESOURCE NAME: The Free Quill Building

SURVEY NO.: PG:LAU-16 (PACS 1.21)

ADDRESS: 126 Washington Boulevard, Laurel, Prince George's County

Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan Data Sheet

Historic Context:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period Theme (s): Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): Commercial, Architecture

RESOURCE TYPE:

Category (see Section 3 of survey form): Building

Historic Environment (urban, suburban, village, or rural): Village

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Commerce, Entertainment, Government

Known Design Source (write none if unknown): None

Preparer
P.A.C. Spero & Company
May 1998

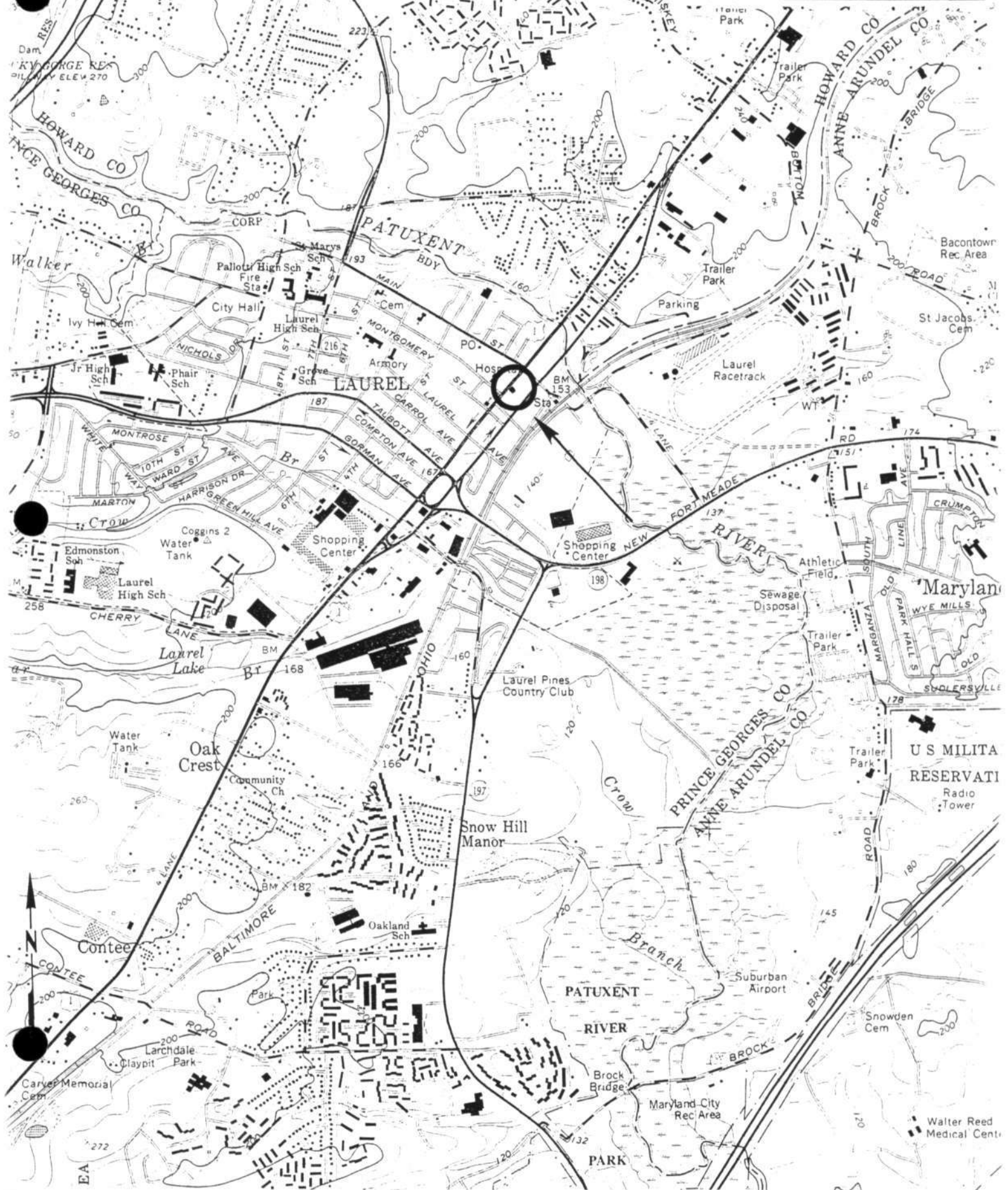
Montgomery-Prince George's Short-term Congestion Relief

Town/County Laurel/Prince George's

Quad Laurel, MD

Survey No. PG:LAU-16 (PACS 1.21)

Property Name The Free Quill Building





- 1 PG: Law - 16
- 2 The Free Will Bldg.
- 3 Prince Georges Co, Md
- 4 Susan Taylor
- 5 5/98
- 6 Md SHPO
- 7 NW corner
- 8 1078

9080271 N N-N-12



- 1 PG 1 Can-16
- 2 The Free Quilt Bldg
- 3 Prince Georges Co, Md
- 4 Susan Taylor
- 5 5/98
- 6 Md SHPO
- 7 W elevation
- 8 2 of 8



- 1 PG: Lan-86
- 2 The Free Quilt Bldg
- 3 Prince Georges Co, Md
- 4 Susan Taylor
- 5 5/98
- 6 Md SHPO
- 7 SW corner
- 8 3 of 8

20080271 N N-12



- 1 PG 144-16
- 2 The Tree Quill Bldg.
- 3 Prince Georges Co, Md
- 4 Susan Taylor
- 5 5/98
- 6 Md SHPO
- 7 S. elevation
- 8 4 of 8

20080271 94442



- 1 PG: Lan -16
- 2 The Free Quill Bldg
- 3 Prince Georges Co, Md
- 4 Susan Taylor
- 5 5/98
- 6 MASHPO
- 7 SE corner
- 8 5 of 8



- 1 PG 1 Jan 16
- 2 The Free Quilt Bldg
- 3 Prince Georges Co, Md
- 4 Susan Taylor
- 5 5/98
- 6 Md SHPO
- 7 Elevation
- 8 6 of 8

2008 0271 N N N-12



- 1 PG: Lau 16
- 2 The FreeQuilt Bldg.
- 3 Prince Georges Co, Md
- 4 Susan Taylor
- 5 5/98
- 6 Md SHPO
- 7 NE corner
- 8 7 of 8

0080271 N N N-22



1 PG: Lau-16

2 The Free Quill Bldg.

3 Prince Georges Co, Md

4 Susan Taylor

5 5/98

6 Md SHPO

7 N elevation

8 8 of 8

MIHP # PG:LAU-16
Free Quill Building
126 Washington Blvd.
Laurel, Prince Georges County, Maryland

Photograph Log

Image File Name	Description of View
PG;LAU-26_2008-09-24_01.TIF	View of front elevation, facing southeast
PG;LAU-26_2008-09-24_02.TIF	View side elevation, facing southwest
PG;LAU-26_2008-09-24_03.TIF	View of rear elevation, facing northwest
PG;LAU-26_2008-09-24_04.TIF	View of side elevation, facing northeast
PG;LAU-26_2008-09-24_05.TIF	View of side and front elevations, facing southeast

Printed on Epson Premium Photo Paper Glossy with Epson UltraChrome Black Ink



MHP # PG: LAU-16

Free Quil Bldg

PG Co. MD

F Kohler

9/08

MS SHPO

Front elev., facing SE

#1 of 5



MHP # PG: LAU-16

Free Quilt Bldg

Pl L. MD

F. Kohler

9/08

MD strPo

Side elev., facing SW

#2 of 5



MHP # PG: LAU-16

Free Quilt Bldg

PG Co. MD

F. Kohler

9/08

MD SHPO

Rear elev., facing New

3 of 5



MHP # PG: LAU-16

Free Quilt Bldg

Pk Co. MD

F. Kohler

9/08

MD SHPO

Side elev., facing NE

4 of 5



MHTD # PG: LAU-16

Free Quail Bldg

PG Co. MD

F. Kohler

9/08

MD SHPO

Side + front elev., facing SE

5 of 5